

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 HA-05 PC-01
SSC-01 /085 W

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O R 151210Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9511

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 8732

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SHUM

SUBJECT: OBASANJO ANNOUNCES MILITARY RESHUFFLE IN PREPARATION
FOR CIVILIAN RULE

SUMMARY: IN CONNECTION WITH THE RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE,
FMG HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT EFFECTIVE JULY 24
ALL 19 MILITARY GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN REMOVED AND REPLACED BY
"MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS" WHO WILL SERVE AS CHAIRMEN OF THE STATE
EXECUTIVE COUNCILS BACKED UP BY CIVILIAN DEPUTY CHAIRMEN. IN
ADDITION, MILITARY OFFICERS WHO ARE FEDERAL COMMISSIONERS WILL
EITHER RETURN TO REGULAR DUTY ON JULY 24 OR CONTINUE IN OFFICE
UNTIL RETIREMENT ON OCTOBER 1, 1979. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN A JULY 14 NATIONWIDE RADIO AND TELEVISION ADDRESS, FMG
HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO ANNOUNCED A SET OF SMC DECISIONS TO IMPLEMENT
A GRADUAL DISENGAGEMENT OF THE MILITARY FROM THE NIGERIAN GOVERN-
MENTAL STRUCTURE. LOOKING TOWARD A RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE IN
1979, OBASANJO SAID THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE DESIGNED TO ENSURE
THAT QUOTE THE MILITARY WILL BE LESS VISIBLE IN NONMILITARY
FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES AS WE MOVE TOWARDS THE FINAL STAGE OF

THE MILITARY'S POLITICAL PROGRAMME. UNQUOTE.

2. AFTER REVIEWING THE HISTORY AND REASONS FOR MILITARY RULE
IN NIGERIA, OBASANJO ANNOUNCED THE SMC'S DECISIONS CONCERNING
STATE GOVERNMENTS: QUOTE

(A) MILITARY GOVERNORS AS KNOWN TODAY WILL CEASE TO EXIST IN ALL
STATES BY MONDAY, JULY 24, 1978. THE PRESENT MILITARY GOVERNORS
ARE BEING REDEPLOYED ON NORMAL MILITARY DUTIES.

(B) BRIGADE AND GARRISON COMMANDERS OR EQUIVALENT IN THE NAVY
AND THE AIR FORCE WILL BE POSTED FOR NORMAL MILITARY COMMAND
TO ALL STATE CAPITALS WITH BRIGADE OR EQUIVALENT FORMATION.

(C) TO THESE COMMANDERS WILL DEVOLVE THE TASK OF MAINTENANCE OF
LAW AND ORDER AND SHOULDERING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTERING
THE STATES AND THEY WILL BE DESIGNATED MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS.

(D) THESE NEW ADMINISTRATORS OF THE STATES WILL REMAIN MEMBERS
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATES, PROMULGATE EDICTS AND PRESIDE
OVER THE STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

(E) A CIVILIAN DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
WHO WILL ALSO BE A COMMISSIONER SHALL BE DESIGNATED BY THE
ADMINISTRATOR AND MAY BE CHARGED WITH ANY ADDITIONAL ROUTINE
DUTIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN THE STATE.

UNQUOTE

3. THE HEAD OF STATE THEN SAID THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS WILL
ACT AS STATE "MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS": QUOTE

ANAMBRA STATE - LT COL D S ABUBAKAR
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BAUCHI STATE - COL G DUBA
BENDEL STATE - COL A WAZIRI
BENUE STATE - GP CAPT BAYO LAWAL
BORNO STATE - COL TUNDE IDIAGBON
CROSS RIVER STATE - CAPT M A B ELEGBEDE
GONGOLA STATE - COL A R A MAMUDU
IMO STATE - COL S A ADENIHUN
KADUNA STATE - GP CAPT IA ALFA
KANO STATE - GP CAPT A SHEKARI
KWARA STATE - COL S O IFERE
LAGOS STATE - CDR O E UKIWE
NIGER STATE - COL J O ONI
OGUN STATE - COL H O D EGHAGHA
ONDO STATE - COL S TUOYO
OYO STATE - COL P C TARFA
PLATEAU STATE - COL J U ANAJA
RIVERS STATE - CDR S SAIDU
SOKOTO STATE - COL M G NASKO UNQUOTE

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4. TURNING TO THE FEDERAL LEVEL, GENERAL OBASANJO SAID: QUOTE
IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT ALL MILITARY COMMISSIONERS WHO BY VIRTUE
OF THEIR RANKS, SENIORITY AND MERIT HAVE TO BE RE-INTEGRATED INTO
THE ARMED FORCES IN THE INTEREST OF THE SERVICES AND OF THE
NATION, WILL BE REDEPLOYED ON PURELY MILITARY ASSIGNMENTS BY
JULY 24, 1978.

THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL HAS ALSO DECIDED THAT ALL MILITARY
OFFICERS WHO WILL BE HOLDING ONLY PURELY POLITICAL OFFICES AND
APPOINTMENTS AS FROM JULY 24, 1978 TO THE END OF THE MILITARY
ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT BE RE-INTEGRATED INTO THE ARMED FORCES
AT THE END OF THE MILITARY ADMINISTRATION. UNQUOTE

5. THE CHIEF OF STATE CONCLUDED HIS ADDRESS BY WARNING THAT:
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QUOTE

THE TEMPTATION TO TEST THE WILL OF GOVERNMENT DURING THIS
TRANSITIONAL PERIOD SHOULD BE AVOIDED. THE TASK OF GOVERNING AND

REDIRECTING THE SOCIETY WILL CONTINUE TO BE PURSUED WITH UN-DIMINISHED VIGOUR, COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION. THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY DISRUPTION OF ITS PROGRAMME BY ANY INDIVIDUAL OR ANY GROUP FOR WHATEVER REASON.
UNQUOTE

HE CALLED UPON NIGERIANS TO QUOTE

MOVE FORWARD IN CONFIDENCE AND REALISM AND WITHOUT FEAR OR DESPAIR TO CONTINUE TO BUILD A UNITED AND POLITICALLY STABLE, ECONOMICALLY STRONG AND SOCIALLY JUST AND DISCIPLINED SOCIETY. UNQUOTE

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6. COMMENT: THE HEAD OF STATE'S ACTION FOLLOWS A WEEK OF LABORIOUS AND TIME CONSUMING SMC MEETINGS. AS OBASANJO ANNOUNCED, THESE MEASURES ARE PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF DISENGAGING THE MILITARY FROM THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AS THE TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE BEGINS IN EARNEST. SECONDARILY, WE WOULD IMAGINE THAT BY SHUFFLING THE MILITARY PERSONNEL CARDS, THE SMC MAY INTEND TO PROVIDE SOME MOBILITY OR AT LEAST A SEMBLANCE OF MOBILITY TO THE REPORTEDLY DISSATISFIED MAJOR-COLONEL OFFICER GROUP.

7. THERE IS A CERTAIN LACK OF CLARITY IN OBASANJO'S REMARKS WHICH WE ASSUME WILL BE STRAIGHTENED OUT IN THE COMING WEEK. IN PARTICULAR, IT IS UNCLEAR WHO AMONG THE SIX MILITARY FEDERAL COMMISSIONERS WILL LEAVE OFFICE ON JULY 24. ACCORDING TO THE DAILY TIMES, ONLY MAJOR GENERALS ADEFOPE (LABOUR) AND OLULEYE (FINANCE) WILL REMAIN IN OFFICE WHILE BRIGADIER GARBA (MEA) AND COLONELS
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MAGORO (TRANSPORT), ALI (EDUCATION), AND BUHARI (PETROLEUM) WILL RETURN TO REGULAR MILITARY DUTY. WE WOULD BE SURPRISED, HOWEVER, IF GARBA WERE TO BE REMOVED FROM OFFICE AT THIS TIME. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE SPEECH, WE ASSUME THAT, AS PLANNED, THE HEAD OF STATE AND CHIEF OF STAFF YAR'ADUA WILL BE RETIRING FROM THE ARMY AT THE END OF THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION. END COMMENT.
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